

Hawk Construction

In 2004, Native American Ron Spoerl started Hawk Construction, a "Hydro-Excavation" company located in Slinger, Wisconsin. The company covers the entire state of Wisconsin, Northern Illinois, and Upper Michigan with an emphasis on metro places like Madison, Milwaukee and the Fox Valley area. Hydro-excavation is a process that utilizes water pressure and suction to excavate soil. This process reduces the chance of striking and damaging underground utility lines. This, in turn, reduces additional costs to repair and reconstruct damaged underground utility lines.

Ron started his business background while attending college in Michigan and working for a large corporation where Ron rose to management positions within the company. His motivation and ambition led him to take advantage of an opportunity to start his own distributing business that served the better part of Milwaukee. Four years later Ron was able to sell his business, "I was looking for more of a challenge and thinking bigger" and that was when he heard and read about hydro excavation. He spent the better part of 2003 researching the hydro excavation business before he decided that was what he wanted to do.



Ron assembled the beginning model of his Team and company and incorporated in 2003. Ron said, "We went out and sold ourselves without even having a truck and contracted out our first job! We did it backwards. Usually you buy the equipment first. When I totally felt comfortable with the opportunity we moved forward." SBA was able to help Ron with a guaranteed loan for the purchase of his first truck and Hawk's was up and running.

During the Hydro Excavation process, Hawk uses pressurized water and shoots it like a laser into the ground creating "mud" slurry that a vacuum sucks up into a forty-foot truck. Around the country, in the last four years, more utilities have been put into the ground than during the entire 1990's. There are companies that can give you an approximate location of a utility "horizontally." Hawk will give you the "vertical location and an actual visual" of that utility safely. Hawk has averaged anywhere from 10-40 locates in a single day. This is substantial when looking at the result versus cost of equipment and labor when waiting for one person to locate a single utility or one that has been damaged by other equipment. Hawk works with everybody that digs in the ground, such as contractors, municipalities, engineers, utility companies, and our government. Their goal is to bring "Safety" to every project when working around utilities.

Ron's philosophy is that all of us are looking for opportunity in our lives. For most people it is money, security, family or maybe a chance to be a part of an organization that wants the very best for everyone involved. Every employee at Hawk is handpicked and given the opportunity to be successful. Their training is done through the "Hawk University" that was created with the help of Vice President/CFO Jim Johnson. Ron considers his employees, his "team" and lets them know "this company is built by you for you." Hawk's is setting the standards through their extensive training and certifications. The service that Hawk Construction provides is outstanding. Continuous training for all employees took place March 31, 2007. In addition to the extensive "Safety" training when working around

utilities, Hawk team members will also now be certified in CPR. Proving again to its customers that Hawk does bring added "value" to any customer it works for.

Hawks started out with two employees and today has fifteen. Ron has created a team from southeastern Wisconsin that has over 30 years experience in the construction industry with over 10 years of experience working with hydro vacuums. Due to the growth of the business, Hawk's wants to continually add opportunities and diversify into areas that will satisfy their customers. Hawk is recognized as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).

Ron's American Indian heritage comes from the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. He belongs to the Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, and American Indian Construction Trade Association and is the chairperson of the Common Ground Alliance. He is on the Board of Directors of the Little River Casino Resort in Manistee, MI. On March 30, 2007, Hawk Construction was awarded the 2004, 2005, and 2006 Safety Award by the Wisconsin Underground Contractors Association (WUCA) Safety Committee. This very prestigious award is issued to those companies with superior safety records in the underground utility industry. In the past few years, Hawk has been on several magazines such as the *Cleaner* and *Underground Construction*. On October 20, 2006, Ron was presented The Secretary's Golden Shovel Award from Secretary of Wisconsin's Department of Transportation Frank J. Busalacchi. The award says, "This was in recognition of his dedication and leadership of Hawk Hydro Excavation which displayed compound growth in a competitive environment all while maintaining high standards of excellence while on WisDOT projects." For more information about Hawk, visit their website at www.hawksdevelopmentcorp.com/.

Ron resides with his wife Leslie and three boys, aged 12, 8 and 4, in West Bend, Wisconsin. The family is also hosting a 16-year-old Japanese exchange student for one year.

Ron seems to have the right stuff and is living out his dream of owning his own successful business. SBA is proud to have been of assistance to Ron in the growth and prosperity of Hawks Development and looks forward to their continued success.